



Progress Monitoring Inspection Report

Esland Bedford School

July 2024

School's details

School	Esland Bedford School
DfE number	823/6002
Address	Unit 54 Wrest Park Silsoe Bedfordshire MK45 4HS
Telephone number	01525 863805
Email address	bedfordschool@esland.co.uk
Headteacher	Mr Rhett Cameron
Chair of proprietors	Mrs Jill Palmer
Proprietor	Esland North Ltd
Age range	8 to 18
Number of pupils on roll	25
Date of inspection	12 July 2024

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Esland Bedford School is an independent, co-educational special day school that was founded in 2006. It is owned and managed by Esland Care and is overseen by a proprietorial governing board. The school occupies a single building on a small commercial estate. It is structured flexibly around pupils' ages, abilities and interests.
- 1.2 All pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Twenty-four pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Nine pupils who are registered at the school receive education off site through its outreach provision in liaison with staff managing Esland Care homes. No pupil has English as an additional language.
- 1.3 The school's previous inspection was a routine inspection in October 2023.

Purpose of the inspection

- 1.4 This was an unannounced progress monitoring inspection at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to check that the school has fully implemented the action plan submitted following the routine inspection of 3 to 5 October 2023. The inspection focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs).

Regulations which were the focus of the inspection	Team judgements
Part 1, paragraph 2 (curriculum)	Met
Part 1, paragraph 2A (relationships and sex education)	Met
Part 1, paragraph 3 (teaching)	Met
Part 1, paragraph 4 (framework for pupil performance)	Met
Part 3, paragraphs 7 (safeguarding)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 16 (risk assessment)	Met
Part 5, paragraph 29 (outdoor space for physical education and play)	Met
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	Met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management)	Met

2. Inspection findings

Quality of education provided – curriculum [ISSR Part 1, paragraph 2]

- 2.1 The school meets the standard.
- 2.2 The school has reviewed its curriculum policy and provision effectively so that pupils now have access to appropriate experience in all the required areas of linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative education. A focus on enabling pupils to develop secure literacy and numeracy skills supports pupils in accessing learning across the curriculum. Recently introduced co-curricular activities are greatly enjoyed by the pupils. These enhance their learning as well as developing their confidence and communication skills. The curriculum and extracurricular activities now consider pupils' ages, aptitudes and needs including those of pupils with EHC plans, across all subjects. Timetabled and well-planned personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons and comprehensive careers education consider the needs of pupils and prepare them for life in British society. Pupils speak with confidence regarding their aspirations for the future and what they need to do to achieve their goals.

Quality of education provided – relationships and sex education (RSE) [ISSR Part 1, paragraph 2A]

- 2.3 The school meets the standard.
- 2.4 The scheme for RSE has been reviewed effectively and a new scheme has been implemented successfully which is in line with statutory guidance. Parents have been consulted appropriately and the school's policy in relation to RSE is available on the school's website. Lessons in RSE are taught consistently by the same staff, who are suitably qualified and have the requisite skills and knowledge to teach PSHE and RSE. Older pupils speak with appropriate maturity and understanding about a range of issues including online bullying and consent. Pupils say that they can easily ask questions and that staff will listen and support them. Sensitively planned RSE effectively supports pupils in understanding their feelings, the changes they are experiencing as they mature and the importance of developing healthy and respectful relationships.

Quality of education provided – teaching [ISSR Part 1, paragraph 3]

- 2.5 The school meets the standard.
- 2.6 Teachers provide well-planned lessons and use effective teaching methods which demonstrate a secure understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils. Detailed tracking is used effectively by teachers and leaders to measure the progress and attainment of each pupil against their EHC plan, curriculum and examination targets. Leaders continually monitor the progress of each pupil. They discuss, with staff, appropriate support individual pupils require, and the impact of support measures that have been implemented. These include a range of therapies. Teachers demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of the needs of pupils. They use a range of suitable resources and methods to support learning. These include the use of visual aids, providing summary notes and scribing whilst a pupil explains their knowledge and understanding. The multi-sensory room is used effectively by pupils to regulate their behaviour when required. Time in this room is measured using a timer to ensure that visits are short and appropriate to the pupils' needs. Staff help pupils to resume their learning with the minimum of disruption. Staff support pupils in learning when they need to move around the school, including in the corridor and outside. Consequently, the school is calm and there is a focus on learning. Pupils speak with enthusiasm and pride regarding their work. They know

their targets and what they must do to achieve them. They are enabled to make good progress according to their ability.

Quality of education provided – framework for pupils’ performance [ISSR Part 1, paragraph 4]

- 2.7 The school meets the standard.
- 2.8 The school has put in place and implemented effectively an appropriate framework for assessment. Suitable assessments are used to ascertain pupils’ starting points, particularly in literacy and numeracy and in pupils’ emotional wellbeing and health. Suitable external qualifications are used to confirm attainment including: functional skills in English and mathematics; a level 2 qualification in finance; a level 2 certificate in digital literacy; and completion of Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) courses in personal effectiveness. This enables clear targets to be set for each pupil against which their progress can be measured. Pupils gain a range of academic qualifications and social skills that prepare them well for life beyond school.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 7]

Safeguarding policy

- 2.9 The school meets the requirements.
- 2.10 The school has an appropriate policy for safeguarding which provides suitable arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school.

Safeguarding implementation

- 2.11 The school meets the standard.
- 2.12 There is a secure culture of safeguarding throughout the school.
- 2.13 Members of the safeguarding team are appropriately trained and experienced. They know the pupils and their needs in detail. They respond swiftly and appropriately when safeguarding concerns are raised. Safeguarding records are detailed, thorough, secure and up to date. They are monitored consistently by the safeguarding team. The school maintains suitable records of low-level concerns. Any low-level concerns are monitored by leaders and appropriate action is taken in response. There is appropriate liaison with external safeguarding partners including the local authority designated officer (LADO), multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH). Concerns are referred to them, when necessary, without delay.
- 2.14 The school’s procedures reflect current statutory guidance. The governor responsible for safeguarding monitors all aspects of safeguarding effectively, including safeguarding concerns, recruitment, the single central record of appointments and staff files. An annual review of safeguarding, in line with the local authority partnership framework, is conducted effectively and considered in detail by the proprietor and leaders.
- 2.15 Staff in school and those working with pupils in the school’s outreach provision are confident in their understanding of actions to be taken if a pupil makes a disclosure. They also know that they can independently make referrals to external agencies. A comprehensive programme of safeguarding training is in place for staff and governors. Recent training has included updates to statutory requirements, the Prevent duty understanding the different types of abuse, physical intervention and mental wellbeing. Daily updates are provided by the safeguarding team for all staff in school, in the outreach provision and in the care homes. Updates include a review of each pupil’s day and identification of any further actions or support needed, including adjustments to risk assessments for

individual pupils. Staff are confident in using the school's electronic system to record any safeguarding concerns and do so effectively.

- 2.16 Pupils understand the importance of having trusted adults they can talk to if they are anxious or have any concerns. They identify confidently a range of staff in the school and in the care homes to whom they can turn if they need help. Pupils know by heart those in their circle of care. This enables them to communicate with a trusted person who will listen and help them.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – risk assessment [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 16]

- 2.17 The school meets the standard.
- 2.18 Leaders have a thorough approach to risk assessment. They have comprehensive and suitable risk assessments in place in relation to health and safety, the premises, supervision, trips and safeguarding. A detailed risk assessment is made for each pupil which identifies their needs and how to manage any associated risks. Risk assessments are adjusted continually. This enables and ensures that actions are taken without delay to safeguard the wellbeing of the pupils.

Premises and accommodation – outdoor space [ISSR Part 5, paragraph 29]

- 2.19 The school meets the standard.
- 2.20 A suitable outside space has now been developed which pupils use at lunchtime and for breaks during the day. Pupils have contributed to selecting equipment for the area and say how much they enjoy being able to get outside. Staff and pupils have undergone training in the use of the outside area. Suitable supervision and risk assessments are now in place. Access to appropriate outside space and equipment has contributed strongly to pupils social and emotional development and to enabling them to manage their behaviour.

Provision of information [ISSR Part 6, paragraph 32]

- 2.21 The school meets the requirements for providing information relating to safeguarding to parents. Particulars of the arrangements for safeguarding are published on the school's website.

Quality of leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34]

- 2.22 The school meets the standard.
- 2.23 The school has effectively and fully implemented the action plan required following the previous inspection. The education and wellbeing of pupils in care homes has been revised so that they now receive suitable outreach education on the school site and there is appropriate liaison with care home staff. Governors and leaders have instigated suitable training. They monitor all aspects of provision regularly and diligently, including where pupils are educated off site, taking any required action without delay. Consequently, leaders and managers demonstrate good skills and knowledge of the Standards and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the Standards are met consistently, and they actively promote the wellbeing of pupils.

3. Regulatory action points

- 3.1 For the regulations which were the focus of this inspection, the school meets all of the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

4. Summary of evidence

- 4.1 The inspectors held discussions with the head, senior leaders and other members of staff and met with the proprietors. They visited different areas of the school, observed lessons and talked with groups of pupils. They scrutinised a range of documentation, records and policies.